Reviewer's report

Title: Occupational exposure to blood-borne infection: survey of universal precautions knowledge and reported injuries in Kabul hospital staff

Version: 1 Date: 15 July 2009

Reviewer: Janet E Hiller

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions
1. The English expression throughout the manuscript requires extensive revision. This review will not note each separate instance of poor expression however every section of the paper – from the abstract through to the conclusions needs review.
2. Abstract: The 2nd line of the methods appears to reflect an early draft as material is missing.
3. Although the abstract refers to logistic regression, adjusted odds ratios and 95% CIs, such analyses are not mentioned in the methods of the body of the paper nor are the data presented in results. This material would be of interest to the reader who would want to know whether there were differences by age, gender etc.
4. The methods described the process for selecting hospitals but not the process for selecting participants within hospitals
5. The authors should note whether the protocol underwent ethical review and whether informed consent was sought from participants.
6. An English version of the questionnaire should be available as an additional file and material should be included on changes made following pilot testing.
7. Tables 2 + 3 are unreadable in the pdf version – they may have been formatted in landscape.
8. The last line of ‘Reported injuries’ alludes to relationships that are not presented in table 1. This may be the product of the logistic regression analysis that is mentioned in the abstract but not elsewhere in the manuscript.
9. The discussion does not contextualise the results. No information is provided comparing findings with those from other studies either in Afghanistan or elsewhere. The authors should highlight what the study adds to existing knowledge.
10. Similarly the discussion should include a statement of the strengths and weaknesses of the study as well as the applicability of the results to Afghanistan as a whole.
11. There are inconsistencies in the presentation of references. Journal title abbreviations are used for some citations but not for others.
Minor Essential Revisions

1. Title: Should read “….: Survey of knowledge of universal precautions....’ instead of ‘survey of universal precautions knowledge
2. Table 2 is not discussed in the text – either it should be removed or the text altered.
3. The subheadings in results should reflect terms used in the title and in table 3 (ie “Beliefs, knowledge and practice” rather than “views and knowledge”)

Discretionary Revisions

1. Table-1: All abbreviations should be spelled out in full at the bottom of the table (eg NSSI). The table should include totals

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests
Dr. Muhammad Aziz Rahman

I declare that I have no competing interests
Prof Janet Hiller